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CLASSIFICATION	SECRET	25X1A
COUNTRY	East Germany	SECURITY INFORMATION
TOPIC	Koethen Airfield	REPORT NO.
EVALUATION	see below	PLACE OBTAINED
DATE OF CONTENT	27 July to 8 August 1953	25X1
DATE OBTAINED		DATE PREPARED
REFERENCES		
PAGES	2	ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)
REMARKS		

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1. The following observations were made at Koethen airfield between 27 and 31 July 1953:
- 27 July. At 7:15 a.m., some of the aircraft were towed out of the hangars. Ten jet fighters were parked in front of the western hangar and 6 jet fighters in front of the eastern hangars. Between 8:15 a.m. and 9 a.m., 15 and 8 jet fighters were towed respectively from the western hangar and the eastern hangars to the take-off point and subsequently practiced flying.
- 29 July. Between 10 p.m. and midnight, night flying was practiced by single-engine aircraft. Local flights were made later by jet fighters.
- 31 July. At 6:45 a.m., there were no aircraft observed outside of the hangars. At 7:10 a.m., 10 MiG-15s with auxiliary fuel tanks were towed out of one of the eastern hangars to the take-off point. At 8:15 a.m., they took off in five groups of two. There was good visibility and the cloud base was at an altitude of 1,200 meters. The interval between the two aircraft of the individual groups was one aircraft length apart and the distance between the individual elements of the two was 300 to 400 meters. The aircraft practiced cross-country flying in close squadron wedge formation. The take-offs, landings and flights were executed very well. At 7:30 a.m., 9 jet fighters were towed out of the other hangar in the northeastern section of the field and subsequently maintenance work was performed on the aircraft. After 9:10 a.m., 10 jet fighters, with auxiliary fuel tanks, were towed out of the western hangar and parked at the take-off point. Subsequently, the planes took off individually and practiced flying in groups of two until about 10 a.m. The interval maintained between the aircraft of the individual groups was 100 meters. This unit, apparently had not reached the high status of training as the afore mentioned formation, discontinued air activity because of a cross wind of about 25 km/h. Between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m., a U-15 from the eastern hangar made individual flights of 20 to 50 minutes duration each.
2. The following air activity and aircraft were observed at the field between 1 and 8 August:
- 1 to 5 August. There was no air activity during the daytime. The noise of aircraft engines was heard during the evening and also at night. It appeared as though the air units were absent from the field. Between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. on 1 August, the western hangar was closed, while the two eastern hangars were open and vacant. A MiG-15, without rudder assembly, was observed in front of one of the eastern hangars. A MiG-15 with a wide vertical red stripe on the rudder assembly was towed from the western section of the field to one of the northeastern hangars.

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6 August. Between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., there were 7 MiG-15s observed in front of the two eastern hangars and 6 MiG-15s, 2 radio trucks, 2 jeeps and 1 tank truck in front of the aircraft revetments in the northeastern section of the field. At 11:47 a.m., MiG-15 [] took off.

7 August. Between 3:30 p.m. and 6 p.m., flights were made by MiG-15s towing sleeve targets. There was good visibility and a light degree of cloudiness. One MiG-15, which was towing a sleeve target at the end of a rope 60 meters long, took off. Subsequently, 2 other MiG-15s took off and flew aft of the towing aircraft. Attacks on the sleeve target were not observed over the field or the town. Two MiG-15s, 1 sedan and 2 trucks were observed at the dispersal area of the alert flight north of the east end of the runway. Northeast of this site, an additional 3 MiG-15s, each with a truck at its side, were observed. Three MiG-15s were parked in front of the western hangar. MiG-15s, [] landed at 6:34 p.m. and 6:50 p.m. respectively.

8 August. At 9:30 a.m., 12 MiG-15s and a radio truck were parked at the eastern end of the runway and 1 MiG-15 was in front of one of the eastern hangars. Between 9:55 a.m. and 10 a.m., 4 MiG-15s [] took off in groups of two. The following aircraft [] were observed during the air activity taking place by the groups of two and lasting until about 11:05 a.m.: [] The pilots apparently were in an advanced status of training.¹

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3. In early August, the air force soldiers in Koethen moved about more freely than previously. They were permitted to leave the airfield in groups. The barracks installations seemed to be lightly occupied. Trucks [] were observed entering and leaving the field.²

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25X1A 1. [] Comment. Koethen airfield was previously believed to be occupied by two fighter regiments, equipped with MiG-15s. One fighter regiment is subordinate to the fighter division in Merseburg, while the assignment of the second fighter regiment has not been determined. The latter regiment is possibly directly subordinate to the Twenty-Fourth Air Army. According to [] a transfer from Koethen to Welzow was observed between 10 and 13 August 1953. Observations made at Welzow airfield and observations made at Koethen airfield between 1 and 5 August, (paragraph 2 of the present report), confirm that a fighter regiment was transferred from Koethen to Welzow. [] also observed the transfer to Welzow of a fighter regiment, probably the regiment which is directly subordinate to the Twenty-Fourth Air Army. Therefore, it is believed that Koethen airfield is now occupied only by the fighter regiment of the fighter division in Merseburg. The aircraft [] reported were previously observed at Koethen airfield except [] previously in Merseburg. [] which are reported for the first time from East Germany. Wide red stripes on the rudder assemblies were previously observed on MiG-15s at Cottbus airfield, which were scheduled for the VFL. It appears possible that these aircraft are temporarily assigned to the Soviet training unit, which is now stationed at Welzow airfield. The other aircraft have possibly been distributed to the fighter units of the Twenty-Fourth Air Army.

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